

CLOSING THE GAP



INTERSTATE 215 *Bi-County* High Occupancy Vehicle (Carpool Lane) Gap Closure Project

Traveling through the Inland Empire will be much easier in the future, thanks to planned improvements to a 7.5-mile stretch of Interstate 215 through San Bernardino, Colton, Grand Terrace and Riverside.

San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG), the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), the California Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration and local agencies are working together to study adding High Occupancy Vehicle lanes – better known as carpool lanes – to I-215 between San Bernardino and Riverside.

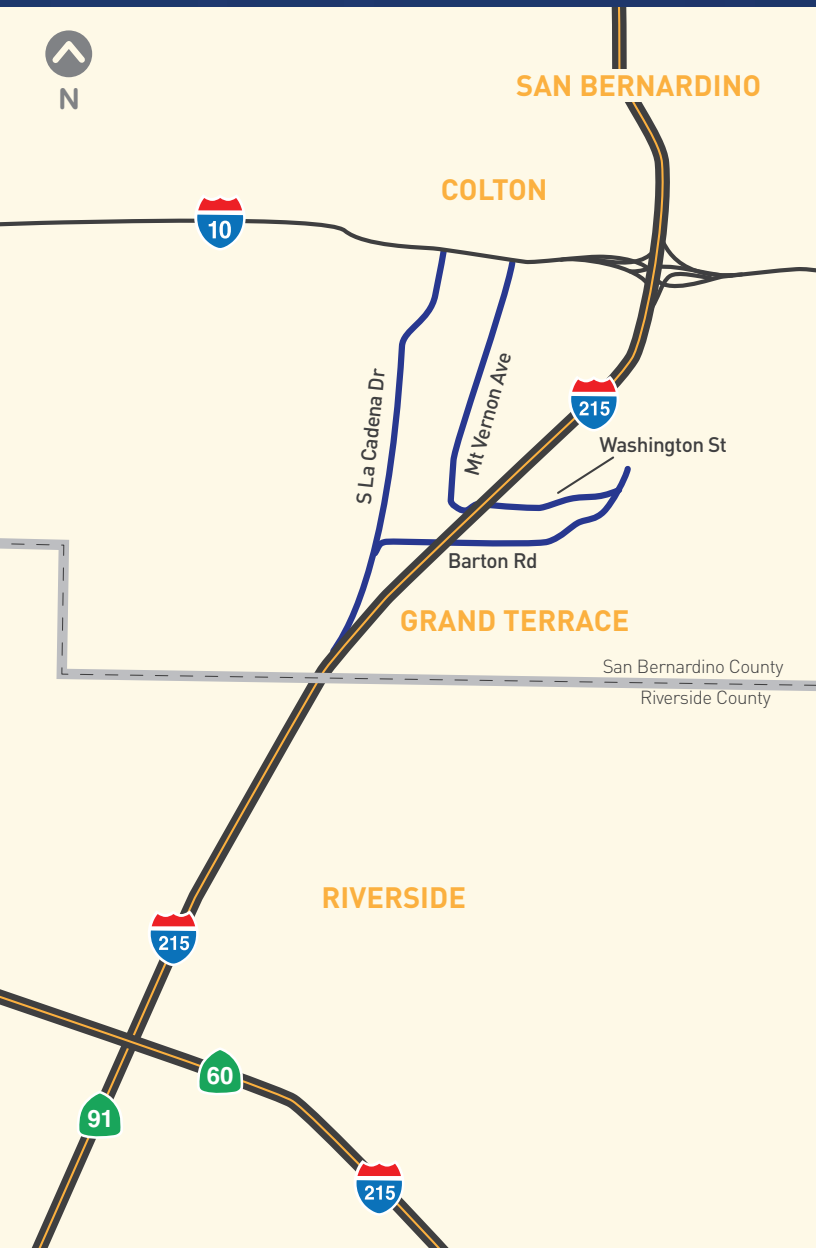
The project will close the gap between carpool lanes being built north of Orange Show Road in San Bernardino and south of the 60/91/215 interchange in Riverside. The lanes

are designed to encourage ridesharing and improve the efficiency, safety and operations of traffic moving between the two counties.

Transportation planners originally proposed adding both a carpool lane and a general purpose lane in each direction to this section of freeway, but have streamlined the project to a carpool lane in each direction to save costs and allow the project to advance. The addition of a general purpose lane is a long-term project for the agencies.

Relief from traffic congestion is greatly needed in this area. Traffic delays are common, especially on southbound I-215 during morning peak hours and on northbound I-215 during afternoon peak hours.

PROJECT AREA



ENGINEERING & ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

PROJECT PARTNERS

- San Bernardino Associated Governments
- Riverside County Transportation Commission
- California Department of Transportation
- Federal Highway Administration
- County of San Bernardino
- County of Riverside
- City of San Bernardino
- City of Colton
- City of Grand Terrace
- City of Riverside

PROJECT FEATURES

I-215 currently has three lanes in each direction on this section of freeway. The carpool lane addition will occur by rebuilding the outside and inside freeway shoulders and restriping the lanes to allow for three general purpose lanes and the new carpool lane in both directions.

Two railroad bridges will be rebuilt, and bridges crossing the Union Pacific railroad tracks, Interstate 10 and the Santa Ana River will be widened. Improvements to freeway interchanges at Barton Road in Grand Terrace and Washington Street/Mt. Vernon Avenue in Colton are planned. The median barrier also will be replaced.

Transportation projects have many phases that are required by law before they can be built. The current phase of work, Project Approval/Environmental Document, involves preparing preliminary engineering and environmental technical reports.

These reports, accompanied by public feedback, help planners understand the full impact of the project and help decisions to be made to minimize effects on the surrounding area. Required by federal and state law to obtain environmental clearance, the studies include:

- Current and future traffic conditions
- Conditions of existing roadways and structures
- Drainage conditions
- Soils and geology
- Water and air quality

- Effects on residents and businesses
- Impacts to cultural and historic resources
- Effects on noise levels and views
- Public services and utilities
- Impacts to sensitive plants and wildlife
- Consistency with city and county general plans
- Cost estimates

Of special interest are studies to determine whether residential sound walls are built next to the freeway to reduce noise. Residents near potential sound wall locations will be asked to participate in the process.

The results of all of these technical studies will be used to prepare drawings of the proposed improvements, develop cost estimates and prepare for future phases of the project – final design, right of way acquisition and construction.

COSTS & FUNDING

Securing full funding for transportation projects is a challenge, especially during difficult economic times. Costs for the current Project Approval/Environmental Document phase of work are being shared by SANBAG and RCTC. SANBAG is funding approximately \$4.8 million of this project phase, and RCTC is funding an estimated \$1.3 million.

Current project funding is provided in part by Measure I, the half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements in San Bernardino County, and Measure A, the half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements in Riverside County. The agencies also will pursue state and federal funding sources for future project phases, including final design, right of way acquisition and construction. Efforts are being made to limit property acquisition along the freeway to help reduce project costs.

The full project cost through construction is estimated to be \$150 million in 2008-2009 dollars. This estimate is subject to change, based on future cost escalations.

MEASURE I & MEASURE A – WORKING LOCALLY

Voters in both San Bernardino County and Riverside County have approved half-cent sales taxes to fund transportation improvements in their counties. Proceeds from both of these sales tax measures are being used to help fund the I-215 project.



Measure I was originally approved by San Bernardino County voters for a 20-year term, from 1990 to 2010. In November 2004, voters supported the renewal of Measure I for a new 30-year term, from 2010 to 2040.



Measure A was originally approved by Riverside County voters for a 20-year term from 1989 to 2009. In November 2002, voters supported the renewal of Measure A for a new 30-year term, from 2009 to 2039.

The renewal of both of these sales tax measures required the support of a super-majority of voters – at least 2/3 of the voters favored the continued use of sales tax revenue to fund transportation improvements.



- Forecasts show a daily demand for carpool lane use by 97,000 vehicles on this section of I-215 in 2040.
- About four out of five San Bernardino County and Riverside County commuters currently drive solo to work each day.
- San Bernardino County commuters spend 43 minutes each way to travel an average of 23 miles in each direction. Riverside County commuters spend slightly more time commuting – an average of 46 minutes each way, traveling 25 miles each direction.

- By 2040, 335,000 vehicles per day are forecasted to travel this stretch of freeway, compared to 160,000 per day now.
- During peak commuting hours, 21,000 vehicles are expected to travel through this area in 2040, compared to 10,000 now.
- Close to 34,000 trucks are projected to move freight through this area daily by 2040, compared to 18,000 now.


Source: Caltrans and Southern California Association of Governments

» ESTIMATED PROJECT SCHEDULES

Project	Complete Project Approval / Environmental Document	Complete Final Design and Acquire Needed Property	Begin Construction	End Construction
I-215 Carpool Lane Gap Closure Project	Mid-2011	Late 2012	Late 2012	Late 2014
Barton Road Interchange	Early 2011	Mid-2012	Mid-2012	Mid-2015
Washington Street/ Mt. Vernon Avenue Interchange	Late 2011	Mid-2013	Mid-2013	Mid-2016

Dates are estimated only and are subject to change.

» GOT QUESTIONS? GET ANSWERS... CALL THE PROJECT HELPLINE



For questions about the I-215 Bi-County High Occupancy Vehicle (Carpool Lane) Gap Closure Project, the Barton Road Interchange Project, and the Washington Street/Mt. Vernon Avenue Interchange Project, please call the toll-free project helpline:

1-888-4-215-TALK

Callers may leave a recorded message, and calls will be returned by the next business day.

» FOR MORE INFORMATION...



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» CARPOOL LANE GOALS & BENEFITS

High Occupancy Vehicle lanes – better known as carpool lanes – provide a reliable way to travel for motorists who share rides, take the bus or drive ultra-low emission vehicles. The key concept for carpool lanes is to move more people, rather than more cars.

Caltrans has defined the goals of these lanes as follows:

- Increase the people-moving capacity of freeways
- Improve air quality by decreasing vehicle emissions
- Reduce traffic congestion and delays by encouraging the use of carpool lanes
- Offer time and cost savings to carpool lane users

In addition, carpool lanes improve trip reliability and reduce dependence upon fossil fuels.

On average, commuters who use Southern California carpool lanes save 36 minutes in travel time each day — or a total of three hours per week.

For more information about carpool lanes, a map of these existing lanes in the region and a list of frequently asked questions, go to sanbag.ca.gov and commutesmart.info.